

Letter from Mabel Hubbard Bell to Alexander Graham Bell, May 3, 1899, with transcript

Letter from Mrs. Alexander Graham Bell to Dr. Alexander Graham Bell. 1331 Connecticut Avenue. Washington, D. C. May 3, 1899. My darling Alec:

I was so glad to get your telegram on our return from our picnic last night. It seems ages since you left, and I do miss you so, the days seem so long and objectless without you to think of, and to plan for at every turn. You got off at the right time however, we are in for a warm spell now. Did you remember that this was to be Elsie's twenty-first birthday? I knew of course, but with so many things going on it got relegated to the back part of my brain. Now (have departed) that you with all the work, rush and excitement you bring it has come forward and of course Elsie wants a party. I thought since it was such an important occasion it was only fair to her to make something of it, so I will have a pretty garden party, with supper out on the lawn, Chinese lanterns, and dancing in the dining room and parlor. What do you want to give her? I think she is really going to turn into a woman that you and I will be proud of. She has been slow in developing but she is showing strength of purpose and great executive ability.

We went for a regular Baddeck picnic yesterday, Elsie, Daisy, Mr. McCurdy, Gilbert Grosvenor and I. I hadn't intended any such nonsense, but we were to go to Mr. Gates' at Chevy Chase that morning, so Gilbert arranged his affairs for a day off. Mr. Gates could not see us and Gilbert's holiday would have been spoilt so we went to Cabin John Bridge, had the wagonette meet us there and drove to 2 Great Falls, spent a couple of hours climbing on the rocks, got back to Cabin John for dinner, and ought to have been home by nine, but delayed so long fooling with a Chevy Chase car that didn't come when expected, and broke down, or was delayed several times, that it was half past ten before we did get home. However we really had an awfully good time, and the heat was

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tempered by breezes and clouds. Gilbert really needed the outing. He said he was not so much completely tired out, but “played out.” I think Elsie is seriously considering him. She remarks that she can dress herself on her own income and that would go a long way. My own feeling is to let things drift as they will — what do you say?

We had quite an exciting time driving to Great Falls. We hadn't been on the wagonette very long before we began to notice our coachman's driving. Presently we rounded that very sharp curve beyond the other stone bridge at full tear, and one of the horses fell, but recovered himself, and we went on. By and by Mr. McCurdy spoke to the man very sharply about driving so fast up hill, so he slackened his pace and we began to watch him, and presently there could be no mistake about his being asleep! Mr. McCurdy jumped on the seat beside him, finally took the reins from him and when we came to a house, stopped and asked him kindly to descend, and we would pick him up on our return. The man was pretty well gone by that time and declined as he “was so far from home.” Mr. McCurdy “my dear man'd” him and coaxed and persuaded, but no use. Finally it was “But you must get off,” then “Will you get off,” and “If you won't get off I must put you off,” and it was the last that took place. Bert surrendered the reins to Elsie and pulled by one leg 3 and gave a good punch and Mr. McCurdy lifted and pushed and between them they rolled the man off on to the road and we all jumped in and dashed off. By the time we were ready to leave the Great Falls the man had appeared thoroughly sober and very much ashamed, and we got home without further accident.

We have another member in our family. Allow me to present to you O. Haru San. She's as pretty as possible and as lovely as a young kitten and — thoroughly untrained! Fortunately my carpets are going up, so she can't do much damage to them. You would go wild over her. She has won two first class prizes and several second and third and \$200.00 was offered for her.

I hope you found the house in fairly good condition, to think of you being still in the cars and it seems weeks since you left.

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Write me soon and give my love to your Father and Mrs. Bell, and please give my remembrances to all the people.

Lovingly ever yours, Mabel. May 3rd.